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SECRET CONTROL

OFFICE OF ORIGIN: Vienna, Austria FIELD HQ. FILE NO. LSX-468
SC

REPORT MADE AT : DATE : PERIOD COVERED : MADE BY
Vienna : 20 November 1946 : June 1946 : DD110
: : :

SUBJECT: Specific - Cadet Benjamin SCHUR, @ Johann HASS
General - Project SYMPHONY

SOURCE: CONDUCTOR : STATUS
: : Pending
:

EVALUATION: Factual

REFERENCE: LVX-207, -221, -226, LSX-315

COMMENT:

These four reports have been held pending a final episode in the case. Since we have no knowledge of Subject's return from Russia and Poland, and since contact with CONDUCTOR has been temporarily suspended, these reports are forwarded as a matter of record.

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Report No. 1, dated 10 June 1946

1. Subject first attracted the attention of DD110 and CONDUCTOR during a religious Passover service in Vienna, attended by officers and soldiers of the Jewish faith of the four Allied Armies. A Russian (Jewish) major made a violently Russian speech, and Subject approached a number of known American Jews and began vilifying the Russian Army, sang Zionist songs, danced the Hora (Palestinian national dance), and spoke fluently in Hebrew. Although it was the first time he had appeared in Vienna, Subject declared openly that all good Jews in the Russian army wanted to quit and that he intended to do so, the sooner the better. He claimed to be stationed in Eisenstadt (50 km from Vienna), and wanted to know where he could meet some really good Jews and "old friends from Zionist movements." The blond Aryan appearance of Subject, however, did not give him a convincing Jewish aspect.

2. Discreet observation of Subject's movements soon proved that he was seeking the acquaintance of Americans and British, frequenting officers' and enlisted men's clubs, and especially seeking the company of young ladies. Once, when asked how he could come every day to Vienna although he was stationed in Eisenstadt, he replied, "that was a secret and he was not going to tell anyone outside his own service."

3. A few weeks ago, he approached the U.S. (Jewish) Chaplain LIFSCHTZ, seeking aid because he had contracted venereal disease from an American girl, and explained that "he was supposed to go out as much as possible with American girls." The chaplain helped him, and Subject from then on frequented the Jewish soldiers' clubs and Jewish DP camps, and apparently spent entire days in Vienna. Surveillance revealed that Subject had an apartment in the U.S. Zone of Austria, a fact which he kept carefully hidden. The questions he asked soon aroused the suspicion that he was on an intelligence mission in Vienna directed against the Jewish emigration problem and against the Allies. Inquiries by CONDUCTOR in Kovno, home town of Subject, revealed that until five years ago, when Subject disappeared to join the Russian Army, he had been a good Jew and a Zionist.

4. Last week CONDUCTOR intercepted a letter from Subject's brother (now an important member of the "organization" (BRICHA) in Lodz, Poland), to be transmitted to Subject through a Sheliach. The letter showed the strong attachment between the brothers, who had not seen each other for more than five years. Instead of sending the Sheliach back to Lodz, CONDUCTOR, after conferring with DD110, decided to use the man to shadow Subject, in order to discover the Russian's intentions and Subject's true status.

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5. The Sheliach "accidentally" met Subject in the Jewish soldiers' club in Vienna, and inquired whether the latter knew a certain Benjamin SCHUR from Kovno, whose brother had sent a letter to be delivered to SCHUR in Vienna. Subject, overjoyed, took the latter, and soon he "opened up" completely to the Sheliach who had been thoroughly briefed by CONDUCTOR. The latter also had taken the additional precaution of having the first Sheliach shadowed by a second, and all interviews between Subject and the first investigator were observed, in order to avoid a breach of security.

6. During this first interview, Subject took the Sheliach to an apartment in the Hotel Pucher (133 Liechtensteinstrasse, Vienna IX), a third-rate place which caters to clandestine rendezvous. Under the influence of liquor, which was abundantly provided by the Sheliach, Subject revealed that he was an officer in the service of the Contra-Svieta (Counter-intelligence) in a Smersch unit located in Eisenstadt, and he produced his NKVD identity card to prove it. He also asserted that his mission was directed against the British, and hinted that his objectives were of the highest importance. Soon his attitude changed, however, and he asked the Sheliach whether the latter knew of any persons of the "organization" here in Vienna to whom Subject could give a letter for his brother, thus expressing a sincere attachment for his brother. Subject's further questions were concerned with members, missions, and procedures of the "organization" in Vienna and in Lodz. Subject then revealed that he was in great difficulty, having had some trouble with his commanding officer for overstaying his residence permit in Vienna, and that surely he would be court-martialed. Discreet but insistent questions about Subject's life in the Russian Army revealed that he had been thrice wounded and thrice court-martialed in the field, "once even getting a death sentence." He did not explain how he managed to survive the court's decision.

7. The next interview took place in the Jewish DP camp in the Alserbachstrasse, a camp which houses trained members of the Zionist Youth organization who are awaiting their emigration to Palestine. Subject was in uniform. The Sheliach told about his own adventures as an NCO in the Russian Army, which seemed to interest Subject very much. Subject then began telling of his "work" for the Russians in Austria, and affirmed that in the course of it he had killed a great number of people in Vienna. He further revealed that he was in rather dire financial conditions, having had to leave his gold watch as a guarantee of payment for the clothes he had ordered from a Viennese tailor. But he stated that "soon he would be back in the chips again since he was about to receive one hundred thousand schillings." He further affirmed that his troubles with his colonel were not yet settled, and

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that he was leaving for Eisenstadt for a few days to straighten out the situation. When questioned by the Sheliach, Subject answered that he wanted very much to leave the Russian Army, but that he could do this only by being demobilized and sent back to Kovno; from there he would have to make his own way back to Vienna and to Palestine. He stated that any unauthorized leave of more than three hours from his "work" would be followed by his arrest (wherever he might be, even in the U. S. Zone) and a death sentence, immediately fulfilled.

8. During Subject's absence, the Sheliach will be briefed on further investigation. Inquiries will have to reveal Subject's chiefs, his unit, its mission and the objectives of Subject's assignment. Should the investigation reveal that Subject has been working actively against the "organization," then CONDUCTOR will call Subject's brother in Lodz, whom he knows as one of his most trusted delegates in Poland, and decide Subject's fate with the brother. CONDUCTOR has enough faith in his Polish "lieutenant's" loyalty to the movement to be sure that the latter will put aside his brotherly love and act only "as a convinced Zionist zealot should." But first Subject was going to be given enough rope to hang himself.

9. Investigations at the Hotel Pucher by a staff member of this office revealed the following: Subject lives there occasionally under the name of Johann HASS, from Hasendorf, Oberoesterreich (Russian Zone), and claims to be a musician. The proprietress of the hotel frequently told him to leave and not to return. The hotel, which is a meeting place for clandestine love affairs, is frequented by a number of adventurous American and British soldiers, and Subject constantly bothered them with questions and invitations to drink. Subject also brought Russian soldiers and officers to the hotel, which displeased the owner, since it annoyed her customers. Once Subject was observed entering the room of an American and was severely reprimanded by the owner. The owner also said that Subject had not been living in the hotel for the past week. (Note: The only explanation for the appointment mentioned in para 6 above is in the supposition that other Russians are living in the hotel under civilian cover and that Subject, who only goes to the hotel in civilian clothes, may have used the room of one of his colleagues. It may also be surmised that since Subject is very often seen in town in uniform, he may have another place where he keeps his uniform and military equipment.)

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Report No. 2, dated 13 June 1946

10. Three days ago CONDUCTOR's Sheliach met Subject in a cafe in Vienna I (International Zone). Subject was in civilian clothes. He told the Sheliach that he was about to go back to his unit to straighten out his difficulties with his chief, and that he might be assigned to a unit outside of Vienna, or in Vienna. His job might also be less important than the one he had held until now. (Note: This can only be explained by the fact that Subject realized that he had been talking too much and wanted to "play down" the importance of his mission.) An appointment was made for sometime within a few days when Subject, on his return from Eisenstadt, would meet the Sheliach.

11. In the meantime Subject was seen in the DP camp of the Rothschild Hospital in the company of the girls mentioned in LVX-221. He was thrown out summarily by Mr. TEICHHOLZ, the manager of the DP camp. (See LVX-226, para. 6 and LSX-315, para. 1) Sunday night Subject was seen in the same DP camp in the same company. This camp is actually the headquarters of CONDUCTOR's organization and is at No. 2 Frankgasse. CONDUCTOR was absent. The occasion was the wedding of CONDUCTOR's new right-hand man, Moshe HAUPF, of the Budapest sub-agency. Subject was observed trying to make the acquaintance of some American JOINT employees and a few Jewish members of the British Forces.

12. On 12 June 1946, Subject was observed approaching a U.S. civilian who works in the Allianz Building (which houses G-2, USFA) and he departed, quite friendly, with the civilian. He later approached the Jewish chaplain, and then Mr. SILVER, the chief of the JOINT in Austria, with the request that they sell him an American uniform. He explained to the chaplain that if he did not manage to obtain the uniform by that night, he would be in great difficulty with his chief. Mr. SILVER and the chaplain refused, of course, but later in the evening Subject was seen meeting the same U.S. civilian, and it is surmised that the civilian may have procured the uniform.

Report No. 3, dated 17 June 1946.

13. Investigations by members of this unit resulted in the information that in the last three or four months, Subject had been contacting a number of strategically-placed male and female members of the Armed Forces in Vienna; among others, American-born secretaries of UNRRA, the Public Welfare Section of VAC, and the DP Section of USFA, the I & E Section of USFA, and some minor personnel in G-2. Interrogation of all of these people

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Showed that Subject had been pretty cautious in hiding his mission and his work, but at the same time displayed a surprising knowledge of the locations, personnel and composition of U.S. and British units in Vienna.

14. The American civilian, from whom Subject has requested American uniforms, was finally located. He was an investigator of the JE OB Section, USFA. A conference between the chief of the Section, Major Cavanaugh, and DD110 resulted in closer cooperation between the two sections on these matters. The two American investigators who have been working on Subject for quite a time, in order to extract JE OB from him, will, from now on, receive their directives from DD110. The plan is to sell Subject some marked cloth and expose him once and for all.

15. A hurried call from CONDUCTOR today disclosed the following information: This morning CONDUCTOR received a 'phone call from Subject, who asked him urgently to come to the Cafe Rita on the corner of the Mariahilferstrasse and Neubaugasse, Vienna VII (French Zone). There Subject, who was dressed in civilian clothes, told CONDUCTOR the following story:

16. Subject gave CONDUCTOR his full identity and disclosed that he was a Russian counter-intelligence officer charged with work against the British. He said that his chiefs were very much dissatisfied with the information that he brought in, and that he was just about due to be court-martialled because of some AWOL cases. Subject further related that on the previous Friday (when he was to have met the American investigator of Major Cavanaugh), he was called to the headquarters of his organization in Wiener Neustadt, where he reported to a captain, his new chief, who, abruptly and without warning, said the following: "You were seen last Sunday at No. 2 Frankgasse, Vienna IX. Do you know what this place is and who is in charge of it?" Subject replied that although he had not reported this visit, he had no reason to hide it, since this was a Jewish DP camp and he attended a Jewish wedding there. (see para. 11 above) His chief then replied: "This is the headquarters of the American Jewish Intelligence Service led by one Arthur We know all about him, about his organization, his agents, his contacts and the American civilians for whom he is working." The Russian captain then showed Subject a complete dossier on CONDUCTOR, but was careful to hide the name of the informant in every report. The captain then asked Subject whether he ever went to a meeting place at No. 25 Schottenring, Vienna IX, and whether Subject knew what kind of a place this was. Subject replied that it was a Jewish soldiers' club for all four nations, and that many Russians came there. His chief retorted: "CONDUCTOR comes there to contact his agents and to recruit new ones among members of other armies. He drives an Opel Imperial and has also a big blue Lincoln."

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17. Subject told CONDUCTOR that he had said he knew "Arthur" as a Jewish member of the International Refugees Committee for Concentration Camp Inmates, had talked casually with him and never knew his last name. The Captain, after a lengthy interview along the same lines as reported above, then told Subject that the latter was about to be transferred back to Russia. He gave Subject a Russian travel order, which Subject showed to CONDUCTOR. On the back of the order were some handwritten lines, which Subject explained to be a declaration that Subject had handed in his NKVD card to his unit. He also received a sealed envelope with a special sealing wax, to be handed to the NKVD commandant in Baden (hq. of Marshal KONEV), which, Subject explained, was simply an order to have him sent back to Russia, since he was of no further value to his service and much too dangerous to be kept around Vienna because of his numerous contacts among British and American civilians and military personnel. Subject also told CONDUCTOR of the incident of the Sheliach who was sent by his brother in Lodz, and who had contacted Subject in Vienna. He also told CONDUCTOR that if he had known who CONDUCTOR really was, he would have come to see him a long time ago. It was only recently, however, that Subject heard from three former school-mates in Riga, whom he accidentally met in the street, that CONDUCTOR was a special Sheliach from the Zionist organization Gordonia (which is true). Since Subject and his brother had previously worked in Riga and land for the same organization, Subject quite naturally was glad to be able to talk to a co-member of the same para-military Zionist organization. CONDUCTOR was very careful to avoid asking any questions which might show either his interest or his intentions.

18. Subject was then asked what was the reason for these confessions and the present interview. He explained that although he had not been active in the Jewish organization for the last five years during which he was in the Russian Army, his greatest wish was to go to Palestine and leave Russia forever. He could do so immediately if he wanted to, but he was afraid that his brother, who is a Zionist leader in Lodz, and his father, who is now in Dvinsk, near Riga, would be immediately arrested if he deserted. He asked CONDUCTOR whether he would transmit a letter to Subject's brother and whether it was possible to transport his father from Dvinsk to Lodz. The plan which Subject had made was to follow his travel orders, continue to Lodz and to Dvinsk, ask for his demobilization from the Russian Army, and then disappear through emigration channels with his brother and father. He asked for the collaboration of CONDUCTOR in this plan.

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19. CONDUCTOR was non-committal during the entire interview and said that he had to contact a number of people before giving a definite reply. Although Subject had said that he was to leave Vienna and report directly to Baden, he asserted that he would call CONDUCTOR the next day from Baden and fix a time for another interview.

20. The biggest problem facing CONDUCTOR now is to ascertain whether the story told by Subject is true. If it is true that Subject's chief (whom Subject calls Captain MELNIKOFF) receives reports about the camp at No. 2 Frankgasse, then there is an informant among CONDUCTOR's most trusted collaborators. This idea is borne out by the fact learned today by DD110 that Subject told his friend, Judith LOEFFLER (see LVX-221) that his chiefs know all about CONDUCTOR's organization through an informant located in the Frankgasse. Another possibility is that Subject, under constant pressure from his chiefs, who expected better results from his intelligence missions, disclosed a certain amount of information, and now that his chiefs are not satisfied, Subject wants to desert through the BRICHA underground and wants to be in good standing with its Austrian chief.

21. CONDUCTOR intends to make a thorough but discreet investigation of all his personnel and will eventually discharge and send away about fifteen male and female members who will be replaced by newcomers who might be easily watched.

Report No. 4, dated 21 June 1946

22. CONDUCTOR has had three more interviews with Subject this week, all taking place in the previously-mentioned Cafe Rita in the French Zone of Vienna.

23. Subject stated that he had reported to the colonel in charge of the personnel section (Odjel Kedra) of his unit, and that he had handed the colonel the travel order. Although this order mentioned that Subject also carried a secret, sealed letter, the colonel did not ask for the letter, and Subject retained it. He later opened it and found that it confirmed his suspicions; the letter said that Subject was dangerous, that he knew too much, that he had not accomplished his special missions to the satisfaction of his chiefs, and that he should be sent back to Russia as soon as possible. In any case, Subject was to be shipped back to Russia within a certain number of days with a convoy of officers, and in the meantime he was free to do as he liked.

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24. Subject wanted very much to go to Lodz to see his brother and take his father from Dvinsk and then flee with both of them to Palestine through BRICHA channels. In a non-committal way, CONDUCTOR promised to help him.

25. During the first interview, Subject told CONDUCTOR that a certain MAX (Inu) had been arrested in Dresden and brought to the Smersch unit in Eisenstadt for questioning. This MAX, a German Jew, had left Germany for Poland; then when the Germans occupied Poland he had gone to Russia, where he became a soldier in the Soviet forces. He later became an interpreter for a Smersch unit in Eisenstadt and frequently came to Vienna, where he had a number of friends among the BRICHA boys. He was a close friend of Mark BRESLAUER, the Palestinian-British sergeant of Signals, who works in the cipher department of Hq. BTA, and who is the best contact CONDUCTOR has in Hq. BTA. One day MAX left the army and emigrated to Munich through BRICHA channels. He must have gone to Dresden to visit his parents, and someone must have recognized him and arrested him. Now, in Eisenstadt, he is grilled by the Smersch people about Jewish emigration and is most probably talking quite freely, since he knows practically everybody.

26. CONDUCTOR immediately asked Subject to find out what MAX is talking about and what his disposition will be. Subject declared that Captain KOSLOFF, of the Smersch in Baden, is in charge of Jewish emigration matters and that by getting the latter drunk, Subject would be able to encourage him to talk. CONDUCTOR gave Subject a few bottles of Barack Palinka (Hungarian brandy) and a few kilos of meat for the purpose.

27. CONDUCTOR has decided to help Subject get back to his brother in Lodz. He therefore has prepared false repatriation papers and a Czech visa and will give these to Subject when he comes back with a complete report on what MAX talked about, as related by Captain KOSLOFF. CONDUCTOR is now satisfied that Subject practically told the truth about his contacts with the BRICHA. He knows that the previously-mentioned British Palestinian sergeant brought Subject to the wedding of Moshe HAUPT. CONDUCTOR also checked with a number of Gordonia boys from Riga who knew Subject previously. He can thus only assume that Subject's story about a Russian informant betraying the workings of the camp in the Frankgasse is probably true. He is making a discreet check of the comings and goings of his personnel and already suspects a certain number of men. Eva WEISS, Judith LOEFFLER and others who have been too inquisitive about things which do not concern them will be transported to the DP camp in Bad Gastein, and will not be allowed to return to Vienna.

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